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does justice to his subject through the gravity and insight of his judgments. Carefully tracing Mirabeau's political course, and reading the man through his policies, he finds in all that he did a certain unity and integrity of purpose. Mirabeau's plan for the salvation of the throne was, indeed, too involved and subtle for practical use. Nobody, except perhaps a Mirabeau clothed with full authority, could possibly have carried it out. But what if, in November, 1789, Mirabeau had been minister? M. Barthou replies that it is not too much to say that the destinies of the country would have been changed. "What Mirabeau, the secret adviser of the court could not accomplish at the time of his death, Mirabeau, the responsible minister, would have attempted eighteen months earlier, and would no doubt have succeeded in doing." And this verdict seems a just summing up of all the more or less intangible evidence of events and of character. Well balanced and convincing, the biography reflects the volcanic passion and contradictoriness of Mirabeau, in many brilliant sallies of characterization, reminding one in this respect of Lord Rosebery's *Chatham*.

MEMOIRS OF LI HUNG CHANG. Edited by WILLIAM FRANCIS MANNIX. Boston and New York: The Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913.

Li Hung Chang was absolutely the most widely known Chinaman in the world, and probably the name of no other foreign statesman, unless it be that of Bismarck, brings up in the minds of so many Americans so prompt and so strong an impression of character. Yet concerning Li Hung Chang as a man and as a statesman, we have had, after all, only anecdotes and scraps of information. Readers of all sorts, therefore, will probably turn to these recently published memoirs of his with more than ordinary curiosity.

We think of him as a great man and as a representative Chinese—we may add, as a man of "unique personality." But this last phrase, by its connotation, perhaps does him injustice. For the final impression that the *Memoirs* leaves upon the mind is not one of eccentricity, of whim, or of racial difference, but rather of sobriety, of consistency, and of that community of intellect and character in which the great men of all races meet.

This is not to deny that in Li's familiar writings—for the book is made up of extracts from his private journal—there is often a flavor distinctively and delightfully foreign. Opening the book at random, we chance upon such sentences as, "I therefore excuse you from decapitation," and, "Upon the last occasion, Her Majesty flew into the worst rage of late times." These are indicative of that difference of thought-color which so often affects us pleasantly in the expression of foreigners. This effect of racial idiom in the writings of Li Hung Chang is more or less pervasive but on the whole not so predominant as we might expect.

As an Oriental he is somewhat more addicted to metaphor and simile than are Western writers upon matter-of-fact subjects. Into such figures of speech he expands liberally at times, so that one does not forget that he once cherished the ambition of becoming the poet laureate of his country. He frequently falls into a sententious style, and he is a maker of original maxims. Sarcastically he asks the ill-advised reformers, "Why not kill all your flock of turkeys because one of them has a limpy foot?" His version of "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown" is "How great and

honorable is the Peacock's Feather of the Throne, yet how much easier rests the head on goose feathers!" This is Chinese enough, surely, but on the other hand Bacon might have written, "It would seem that a great many people do not imagine they are doing things at all unless they are going to extremes." On a great variety of topics, from matrimony to the tall buildings of New York, Li's opinions, or the form in which they are expressed, have something of that unexpectedness of which we are perhaps a little too avid.

But through it all we see him as a man of massive character and lucid mind. Li Hung Chang was, in a sense, a self-made man; for his father, though able to give his son a thorough education, held no official position and had no influence with the government. Li distinguished himself early in his studies, and at first his aspirations seem to have been purely literary. But at the close of his student days the Taiping Rebellion broke out; he raised a volunteer regiment and entered the fray. For four years he was a warrior, and the end of that period found him at the head of the force which put an end to the uprising. Under his command were such men as General Ward, who organized the "Ever-Victorious Army," and "Chinese" Gordon. For twenty-five years Li Hung Chang was Viceroy of Tientsin. Among the difficult negotiations which he brought to successful conclusions were those relating to the differences with France growing out of the Tientsin riots in 1870, the peace negotiations following the Japanese War, and the propitiation of the Powers after the Boxer outbreak. Four times the Empress Dowager, in her wrath, stripped him of his yellow jacket; yet he never wavered in his allegiance, and almost with his last breath he saved his country.

His superiority of mind is in no way made more manifest than in the gradual change of his attitude toward foreigners and Christians. Rabidly anti-Christian at first, and filled with patriotic hatred of the "foreign devils," he attained in the end to a degree of tolerance and even sympathy that is all the more remarkable when one remembers that his education had been purely Chinese and that until his seventieth year, when he made his tour of the world, he had never visited the Western nations.

His journal shows him very human. It is true that he is somewhat more ruthless toward evil-doers than are we, somewhat more indifferent to the shedding of blood. It is also true that he does not care for Western music. But, on the whole, he lives in the same world, morally and intellectually, with the rest of us. It is likely that his *Memoirs* will help to dissipate the more or less mythical notion that the Oriental and the Occidental minds are in some mysterious way incomprehensible to each other.

THE QUEST OF THE BEST. By WILLIAM DEWITT HYDE. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1913.

This book of President Hyde's is one of the few of which it may be said at once and without reserve that they will do good. It illustrates the hopeful present tendency to formulate the results alike of common sense and of abstract thinking to a serviceable end, and, instead of insisting upon dogmas and doctrine, to select from science, philosophy, and the thought of the best and wisest men, what is most applicable to life.

The Quest of the Best is addressed primarily to parents and teachers;